

Propaganda and the Media: Part 1 – Introduction, by Larry Romanoff – The Unz Review

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Note to Readers:

For a period of about ten years, I operated a website of political commentary that contained thousands of articles, many of which were content from various media, but many being my own work. That website experienced occasional but persistent DDOS and other attacks by forces unknown

Some years ago, I published on that website a three-page article on the Western media similar in content to the media series I am presenting here. Of all my written work, only this one article was under constant attack. Most often, the pages wouldn't load properly, preventing readers from seeing the full contents and preventing them from clicking through to the following pages. It was clear I had attracted the attention of someone who preferred to not have this information in the public realm.

A short while ago, I wrote an article titled, A Search for Truth and Understanding. It provides an excellent lead-in to this series and I suggest you read it. It isn't long.^[1]

When I arrived in China the news reporting format was one of the first things to draw my attention. There was something different, unusual; the reporting seemed somehow stilted, a bit dry or reserved, perhaps cautious. Reserve and caution are of course Chinese tradition, but I had difficulty assessing it. My first

thought was that perhaps the government controlled not only content but method – the way news was reported.

But it slowly dawned on me that the unusual aspect was simply that I was seeing news without commentary – a simple chronology of events. I had become so inured to the rampant opinion-based journalism in North America that the absence of this in China made articles seem somehow barren and empty. But they weren't empty of news; they were empty of the opinions, biases, propaganda, conjectures and moral judgments that in the West are always inextricably mixed with fact. Looking at most Western newspapers today, and certainly on topics related to politics, capitalism, religion or US imperialism, seemingly every article contains 3 facts, 4 conjectures, 2 false hypotheses, 6 moral judgments, 12 baseless opinions and at least 6 unfounded accusations, all following a coherent agenda. It is impossible to find honest reporting in America's mainstream media today – and indeed in all the Western media, the reported “news” being little more than an ideology surge, journalism having openly become nothing more than perception management for imperialism or political power.

The US and Canada, and primarily all English-speaking countries, once had factual news reporting. But with competition for readers or viewers, the media began adding what they called ‘color’ to the news, additional information intended to make a news story more interesting, reporting for e.g., that someone in the news had a son who was an Olympic athlete; not related directly to the story, but adding human interest. The trouble with color is that there isn't very much of it, and the media wasted no time replacing it with commentary, essentially editorialising news with ideological viewpoints.

Of course, the Western governments and the media were well-versed in Bernays' clandestine propaganda theories, but by the 1980s ‘clandestine’ was no longer operative and even subtlety had been abandoned, ideology being not only ubiquitous but in the open. With the English media today, there is no longer any separation of fact and opinion. This is so true that many articles contain no news

other than an oblique reference to some past event, and consist entirely of ideological editorialising, in fact heavily biased op-ed pieces providing primarily a political interpretation the elites want us to adopt, creating abuses of every description. Americans, Canadians, Brits and Aussies have now for two generations been exposed to this deceitful reporting and are no longer aware of the extensive propagandising even though it no longer remains hidden.

As someone wrote so accurately: “Traditional journalistic news room culture determines the basic nature of a story before the facts are assembled.”

“A young reporter writes an expose, but the editor says, “I don’t think we’re going to run that.” The second time the reporter goes to her editor, the editor says, “I don’t think that’s a good idea.” She doesn’t research and write the story. The third time the reporter has an idea. But she doesn’t go to her editor. The fourth time she doesn’t get the idea.” – Nicholas Johnson, former FCC commissioner^[2]

It is true that we now have a daily stream of fabricated news. Some of it is completely fabricated in the sense that there was no newsworthy event that occurred, but where a few small facts from a topic of current interest are used to provide an excuse for political editorials. Most of it is driven by a political/capitalist ideology promulgated with a startling lack of regard for truth, using badly twisted interpretations of a few facts to spin an entirely false story. Journalistic integrity has all but disappeared from the Western countries. And indeed it is much worse than this, because a great deal of our “news” is in reality totally fabricated, with the requisite faked video and audio, misleading headlines, twisted information and bald outright lies. I am referring here to actual fabricated concoctions – invented ‘news’ – things that never happened, or that didn’t occur at all in the way they are presented. And we aren’t talking about ‘color’ or ‘bias’ here; we’re speaking of actually fabricating an event and making firm statements that are knowingly false. I will provide some typical – and outrageous – examples. You can begin with this story of Jessica Lynch and another of Osama bin Laden.^{[3][4]}

For most of us, it seems incredible that a news story could possibly be a fiction. We are apparently unable to accept that our government and media would actually lie. But lie, they do. Several years ago, CNN was sued by one of their news anchors for being ordered to lie in the newscasts. CNN won the case. They did not deny ordering the news anchor to lie. Their defense was based simply on the position that American news media have “no obligation to tell the truth”. In February 2003, a Florida Court of Appeals unanimously agreed with an assertion by FOX News that there is no rule against distorting or falsifying the news in the United States. FOX asserted that there were no written rules against distorting news in the media, arguing that, under the First Amendment, broadcasters have the right to lie or deliberately distort news reports on public airwaves. Fox attorneys did not dispute a news anchor’s claim that they pressured her to broadcast a false story; they simply maintained that it was their right to do so.^[5] In these cases, and in others, the position of the US courts implied that First Amendment rights belong to the few individuals who own and/or control the entire media landscape, a kind of shield protecting their vast propagandising campaign.

We have come to the point where Western media are practicing a kind of psychological warfare. “We all know that our State Department, the Pentagon, and the White House have brazenly proclaimed that they have the right and the power to manage the news, to tell us not the truth but what they want us to believe.” – Myron Fagan^[6]

This is a large and complex topic, but let’s begin with something simple. Since we are indeed being propagandised by our own media on a daily basis, how do we recognise what is happening to us? How do we distinguish propaganda? How do we separate truth from lies? What are the main things to look for?

1. Atrocity tales.

The first is what some people today call “atrocity porn”, in fact violent pornographic tales of events that have never occurred. For this, you can recall my

comments in an earlier Propaganda article on the recommendations of Bernays and Lippman that the best way to create hate and anger towards a people is to fabricate atrocity tales. The Germans having tubs full of Jewish eyeballs, of using Jewish fat to make soap and industrial lubricants, of skewering babies and raping nuns.^[7] We progressed to Saddam Hussein having WMDs ready to launch, his using wood shredders to eliminate his political opponents, of gassing millions of Kurds and burying them in mass graves, of his soldiers tossing babies out of incubators.

We had Khadaffi issuing Viagra to his soldiers, enabling them to rape more women. And we had “proof” of this, in the woman who did a survey (during a war) of abused women. 1,300 questionnaires sent out, 1,200 returned and all 1,200 women claimed to have been raped. When the Red Cross and Human Rights Watch tracked down the woman and asked to interview some of the victims, well the woman had unfortunately “lost touch” with all of them. After all, there’s a war on.

We had Bashar al-Assad in Syria gassing his people with chlorine. In the end, no evidence – no evidence – was ever discovered to substantiate any of these claims, but it was too late; the countries had already been attacked and destroyed.

Today we have the ‘genocide’ in China’s Xinjiang, the ‘concentration camps’ imprisoning millions in forced labor, and with unlimited forced sterilisations, the forced extermination of the Uigur language, the destruction of Moslem temples and graveyards and much more. In fact, the only thing happening in Xinjiang is the Chinese government’s astonishing success in de-radicalising hundreds of thousands of (Western-trained) potential terrorists, replacing religious extremism with gainful employment. We have Pompeo’s “proof” that COVID-19 escaped from a Chinese lab. Again, no evidence has ever been presented to substantiate any of these claims; as always, idle claims are equated to evidence.

2. Hate literature

Almost without exception, anything leading you to form a negative opinion of (usually) a country or its people, is propaganda, normally to build support for outrageous political action or in preparation for the next war. You need think only of the constant stream of negative news items about Russia, China, Iran, Cuba, formerly Iraq and Libya, Syria, Venezuela, Cuba . . . To the extent possible, atrocity tales^[1] are part of this media onslaught.

3.Framing



This is one of the more insidious tools of propaganda – instructing us ‘how to think’ about a particular event. The invasion and destruction of Iraq were termed by the military and in the media as “Operation Iraqi Freedom”. People who are genuinely concerned about contamination and dangerous side-effects of vaccines are termed “Vaccination terrorists”. When Radio Free Europe started broadcasting its lies about the East in 1950, people were asked to donate “truth dollars” to fight communism, a bit like sending “freedom fighters” to Libya and Syria. As George Carlin said, “If fire fighters fight fires, what do America’s freedom fighters fight?” Hong Kong’s terrorists are defined in the media as “democracy protestors” – who, in one university lab alone, had created more than 10,000 petrol bombs which were used on government buildings and police stations (and on the police themselves), and who poured gasoline on a man and set him on fire.^[8] In all these cases, the first step is to provide a useful propaganda definition which, if adopted by the public, eliminates independent thought in one swoop.

4.Flooding the Media

If you think back to recent world events, even very major items like the destruction of Japan’s Fukushima reactor and the leakage of vast amounts of radioactivity into the Pacific, grab the headlines for only a short time, then disappear. Most events are ‘news’ for only a day or two. But whenever we see an item recurring repeatedly in the media for weeks and months, and even

sometimes for years, this is a 100% sign that we are being propagandised and that the media flow will not cease until polls tell our masters that a majority of the population has accepted the position being promoted or that the political pressure has achieved its desired result.

One such occurrence was the exchange value of China's RMB. You may recall that when Japan was in a competitive position similar to China 40 years ago, the US forced the Plaza Accord onto Japan, revaluing the currency upward by nearly 300%, destroying the economy and eliminating Japan as a contender. The same was planned for China, led by Paul Krugman, the NYT's Renminbi Rambo, screaming that China needed to revalue its currency by "at least 25% to 40%". These stories of 'China cheating' on its currency and the necessary 40% revaluation occurring at least weekly in the Western media and the US Congress for perhaps ten years. But in fact, China's currency had always traded in an appropriate range, as has been proven by subsequent events, and the Chinese government did not bow to the media and political pressure.

Today's stories of China's Xinjiang, yesterday's stories of the 'horrors' of ZIKA, and more. One of the more noticeable of these is the new religion of "sexual preferences" which has been hyped in the media non-stop to the extent that few politicians would have the courage (or the death wish) to refuse participation in a Gay Pride parade. The power of propaganda.[\[9\]](#)

China's Huawei is another such item, garnering far more media attention than an actual circumstance would require, and with good reason. Huawei has been in the US, Canada, and many other nations during G1, G2, G3 and G4, and never a hint of a suggestion of espionage or any threat to 'national security', so what happened suddenly with G5? You may care to read this, to understand the details.

[\[10\]](#)

5.Changing Your Values

Anything suggesting you alter your moral values especially sexual, or on abortion, assisted death, pornography, immigration, family values, today's Western white

trash. In this category we have had an enormous volume on all of these topics. I would include here a recent NYT article freeing corporate executives from responsibility for all crimes including negligent manslaughter [\[11\]](#)[\[12\]](#), the movie *Pretty Woman*, and the flood referred to above on our new sexual perversions presented as “preferences”.

6.Hit Pieces

Whenever you see an author or a publication being trashed in the media, you know there is something they don’t want you to know. The best is to go there immediately and find out what that is. Almost invariably, whenever people are being demonised, you know that’s propaganda; you are being indoctrinated to avoid information they don’t want you to have.

When James Bacque [\[12\]](#)[\[13\]](#) published his historically-surprising works of the millions of Germans killed in American concentration camps in Europe in the years following the end of the war, [\[14\]](#) he was bitterly excoriated in the North American media, his research being derided as “worse than useless” even though he’d relied entirely on US military records and the introduction to his books was written by a senior US military officer. His work was denounced as “a deeply-flawed book” [\[15\]](#). Someone didn’t want Americans to know, while Bacque’s books have been translated into about 15 languages and in Europe he is widely admired as an historian of consequence.



When the President of Tanzania derided Western vaccines for COVID-19 and claimed Tanzania would refuse to participate in the global vaccine money-making machine, the UK Guardian published an astonishing article stating that “this man must be removed” from his office [\[16\]](#). A short while later, Magufuli mysteriously collapsed on a public stage and was pronounced dead, the Guardian writing a dozen or more articles celebrating the event. It was a surprise, to say the least, that the Guardian would have any interest in such a minor person and item.

Magufuli was the same man who denounced the American virus tests, claiming a goat and a papaya tested positive.[\[17\]](#)[\[18\]](#)

The same is true of Henry Ford's series of articles on The International Jew.[\[19\]](#)[\[20\]](#) This has for more than 100 years been denounced in vicious terms as 'anti-Semitic rants' but, on reading them, we are surprised to discover they are no such thing and that Ford in many instances praised the Jews for their talents. But the articles contain information that some people don't want widespread in the public domain and, the best defense being a good offense, the attacks are intended to pre-empt examination.

7.Confusion of Information

Whenever a media propaganda topic arises and contrary opinions and conclusions are leaking into the public realm, we invariably see a multitude of articles creating floods of extraneous information that serve only to create confusion in the public mind and prevent rational thought and conclusions. Often, this flood of unwelcome information is used to direct public thought in wrong directions and avoid if possible any focus on the core of the issue. COVID-19 is one such example, with columnists, apparently medically-qualified, proving that lockdowns are either useful or a crime against humanity, that masks will either prevent infection or starve you of oxygen and leave your children brain-dead. Or that the virus originated in either bats or pangolins or bananas, or frozen salmon, or Fort Detrick or the Wuhan university, or caves in Sichuan, and that it was unleashed either deliberately, or by accident, or by lab Ph.D's selling the diseased animals on the street for coffee money. And at least 100 "facts" to support each of these claims.

Whenever we are reading about a serious current event and find suddenly multiple opinions and conclusions by multiple persons all apparently qualified, we know we are suffering a propaganda attack. It will never occur otherwise.

8.Fake NGOs

One common strategy for propagandists when promulgating questionable theories about events or accusations against a nation, is to produce ‘off-the-shelf’ NGOs with legitimate-sounding names as the actual author of the accusation or theory in question. So we suddenly see the “Center for Democratic Transition (CDT)” promoting “honest and accountable government” somewhere, or vicious trade agreements promoted with the support of the “Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) in Washington”. And of course we have the ‘World Uigur Congress’ in Washington, created by the CIA with two people, masquerading as the only legitimate world voice of China’s millions of Xinjiang Uigurs, to say nothing of the “Tibet Government in Exile”, also created by the CIA with two people and also in Washington.

If you haven’t heard of the organisation before, it very likely did not exist before, and was created only yesterday to lend a bit of credibility to an otherwise-hapless tale.



9. Fact-Checking

You may (or may not) be surprised to learn that fact-checking is a huge worldwide industry conceived and created years ago as a powerful censorship tool, and funded with seemingly unlimited millions of dollars primarily by George Soros, the Gates Foundation, various media companies, and similar. They were never created to fact-check George Bush’s claims about Iraq WMDs, but to ‘fact-check’ you and pronounce you false when you disputed Bush’s claims.

I recently wrote a heavily-documented article on the thesis (now widely-accepted, I believe) that the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic was not influenza but was instead a bacterial infection (proven and accepted) the tragic result of a misguided experiment by the Rockefeller Medical Institute of a meningitis vaccine that began at Fort Riley in the US and spread around the world not by the soldiers but by Rockefeller itself.[\[21\]](#) Reuters immediately conducted a ‘fact-check’ of the thesis and pronounced it false. Reuter’s evidence? Non-existent, the

claim sufficing as irrefutable proof.[\[22\]](#) Moreover, some of their claims were completely false.

You will be surprised to learn of the tricks these fact-checkers play in producing their results, and of the actual violations and crimes (civil, at least) they will commit in pursuing their ends. To my best knowledge, there are no fact-checkers that are not part of this worldwide network. Some like to rely on sites like Snopes, but these have also been co-opted and have now become part of the propaganda chain, filling in one of the last holes in the highway of lies. As one quick example of the latter, almost everyone has seen the video of Pompeo stating “We lied, we cheated, we stole.” Snopes’ fact-check experts tell us it is only “partially true” that Pompeo said this. In simple terms, whenever any major media outlet claims that something has been fact-checked, delete this information from your consciousness because it is almost certainly false.



10. Too much of the story known in advance

There are many such examples and all should raise an extreme cautionary awareness in readers. In the event of 9-11, the full story of who, how, and why was flooding the media the next morning, while in real life there wasn’t even sufficient time to fully realise what had happened. ZIKA was another such tale, [\[23\]](#) as were the reports of gassings in Syria, replete with all details which were later proven to have no substantiation.

11. Negative and Unpleasant Emotions

Anything creating a negative emotional response, other than perhaps the story of a tragic death or similar. Propaganda relies heavily on emotion, often primarily fear and usually of fears you might not care to discuss openly. It also relies heavily on hate and anger, arousing feelings of injustice or horrible crimes against populations. The rule is that whenever you find a news item creating a negative emotional response in yourself, you are almost certainly being deliberately

stuffed with false propaganda. Think of all the tales of Iran, Libya, Iraq, Syria, Russia, China, so many nations and so many events, and yet none of those terrible things have ever been substantiated.

12.Opinion-based articles . . .

. . . with a few truths and many lies, articles that provide no detail or omit crucial details. These may be difficult for you to identify without some research of your own. I will provide some excellent examples.

13.Things that Just Don't Make Sense

The two epidemics of UK foot and mouth disease [\[24\]](#) that resulted in the culling of millions of cattle and bankrupting most small farmers. “Animal Rights Activists” entered the Level-4 Military bio-weapons labs at Pirbright and Porton Down and stole thousands of liters of the deadly pathogen and spread it throughout the entire country. Alternatively, “a leaky drain” at Porton Down released a pathogen that killed cattle 500 Kms. distant – and nobody noticed. The fact that anyone attempting to penetrate a military bio-weapons lab would most likely be shot dead, was ignored, as were dozens of other facts.

“Pork Speculators” in turn obtained thousands of liters of deadly swine flu pathogen and used small drones to kill several hundred million pigs in China. No explanation as to why they would do that, nor whether they obtained the pathogen at the nearest 7-11 or at Wal-Mart, and all the rest. A Chinese scientist in the US announces he is on the verge of a great discovery [\(25a\)](#) as to the origin of COVID-19, but a day later this happily-married man has an argument with a gay lover who kills him and commits suicide. Discovery is lost. Two Chinese scientists working on COVID-19 fired from a government lab in Winnipeg, Canada, [\(25b\)](#) police involved, but no accusations, no crimes, merely a “procedural issue” which instantly disappears from the media, meaning they saw something they weren't meant to see. Chinese medical students taking back to China samples of some “brown fluid” related to COVID-19, and arrested for ‘smuggling’ – which is usually a crime of bringing in, not of taking out.

14.Censorship

Propaganda, whether positive or negative, can be undermined if contrary views – or the truth – can be disseminated to the public at the same time, so media control is vital to eliminate other views or prevent them from gaining traction. Death is the ultimate censorship. Ask Gary Webb, the only known example of a man committing suicide by shooting himself in the head twice. It isn't difficult to determine if event coverage is being censored, and you can be very certain of it when even the social media de-platform you, cite you for 'fake news', and Google suddenly cannot remember who you are.

15.Pablum for the Masses

This is one sure way to know that you are being fed propaganda. An easy example is recurrent articles in a Canadian newspaper with titles like “What is in the COVID-19 vaccines?” ([25c](#)), articles that omit all the real concerns of real people and provide no information of value, and which specifically omit mention of aluminum and the female hormones and other contamination which have been widely-reported to be contained in these.

16.Polls

Interestingly, public polls can tell us much about the agenda underlying various propaganda campaigns. As one example, the Western media have been flooded for more than one year with anti-China hate propaganda, centered on the coronavirus but including much else. [\[26\]](#) We can almost sense the glee in Gallup or Pew in reporting that assaults against “Asians” have increased by 793% during the past year, since that was clearly the point of the propaganda. And this is far from the first time such has occurred; the practice began in England during the war years. You may care to read this[\[25\]](#).

17.You don't know what you don't know

Propaganda does not only involve telling you what to think and how to think, or what not to think. There is also a huge industry that ensures much news never comes to your attention so that you don't think 'the wrong things' about the wrong people. One example: In 2011, a Saudi judge advertised for a doctor to perform spinal surgery on a man, for the purpose of destroying his spine and leaving him crippled for life. The man had apparently caused a traffic accident that left another man with a damaged spine and the judge determined the appropriate punishment was "an eye for an eye". Did you read about this? No. It's not on the agenda.

18. Propaganda Success

Lastly, here are two examples of how successful a propaganda campaign can be, with the power to have all the media onside and to crush dissenting voices. The first is the story of China's great famine in 1959, the story propagated in Western minds attributing the blame to Mao and being rubbish in entirety.^[27] The second is the real story of China's Tiananmen Square in 1989, certainly one of the greatest propaganda victories of all time.^[28] The article referenced is considered the definitive work on this topic, at least in English, though the Internet gatekeepers will not permit many of the necessary photos to be reproduced on any website.

I will cover all these and more in a brief series of articles on Media Propaganda.

Mr. Romanoff's writing has been translated into 30 languages and his articles posted on more than 150 foreign-language news and politics websites in more than 30 countries, as well as more than 100 English language platforms. Larry Romanoff is a retired management consultant and businessman. He has held senior executive positions in international consulting firms, and owned an international import-export business. He has been a visiting professor at Shanghai's Fudan University, presenting case studies in international affairs to senior EMBA classes. Mr. Romanoff lives in Shanghai and is currently writing a series of ten books generally related to China and the West. He is one of the

contributing authors to Cynthia McKinney's new anthology 'When China Sneezes'.

His full archive can be seen at <https://www.moonofshanghai.com/>

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Notes

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